GOODWIN'S WEEKLY

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.
SUBSCRIPTION PRICE:

Including postage in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, $2.00 per year, $1.25 for six months. Subscriptions to all foreign countries, within the Postal Union, $2.50 per year.

Single copies, 5 cents.

Payment should be made by Check, Money Order or Registered Letter, payable to **Goodwin's Weekly.**

Address all communications to **Goodwin's Weekly.**

Entered at the Postoffice at Salt Lake City, Utah, U. S. A., as second-class matter.

Telephone, Wasatch 301.

Boston Building, Salt Lake City, Utah.

CONCERNING LADY O'LOONEY

By Harry B. Kennon

CONTEST, that's life; peace, that's death; so long as we want to dominate we know we are strong. We must grow like trees, even if blood must feed our roots. If we cease to grow we begin to decay; we must fight for life and for love, because nobody's going to give us life or love for nothing. There's not enough to go round, you see. It's taking we've got to do, and the taking justifies us, because none save the strong have the right to live. Poverty, weakness, self-sacrifice, these are the crimes, these are the soft spots of the strong, the things that overcome them in the end. We're like crabs in a bucket, all anxious to get to the top and the noblest are not those who lie at the bottom, for they'd gladly be at the top. * * * My God, I'll go gladly singing into battle."

Not a disciple of German "Kultar' toasting "Der Tag!" gentle reader, but the arch-hedonist of W. L. George's "The Second Blooming." (Little, Brown & Co.) in which all are hedonists, voicing the culture of the governing class of England; a class that Mr. George finds sufficiently important to depict mercilessly in his brilliant feministic novel, or, more carefully speaking, novel of feminism.

"In the motley assembly which is modern society were other busy women, too. There were many of those beautiful, well-gowned, detached women who seem a typical product of English civilization. Carefully they preside over social functions; they assist at political meetings, those of their fathers' party when they are girls, those of their husbands' when they become wives; they read, without partisanship, the book of the day; they go to picture shows and buy pictures, when the artist is an acquaintance; they love their daughters, send them to the right schools, marry them to the right men; they love their sons, and direct their tastes towards the right regiments. Strictly they are the organizers of the governing class, they are the people who take orders from men and make them a little more human; they form against the threatening desire for reform which the working class growls out now and then in the shape of an incoherent, impotent strike, a broad bulwark of refinement which is strong by the very fact of their luke-warmth, of their rather faded elegance. It is almost as if these ladies stood in front of the docker, clamoring for an extra penny, raised a deprecatory finger, and said: "Hush! what naughty words!" And so gracefully do they stand, so assured that their class will always stand, that, after a few growls, the docker goes very much like the lion that noses its prey and, finding that it seems to be dead, leaves it alone. It is enough to make one wonder whether these ladies, and all those whom they represent, are not indeed corpses, shamming life with amazing skill." * * *

Mr. George is entirely justified in his portrayal; for the class he writes of have undoubted power—the rotten power of making her imitate them and strive to "belong."

Emerging into this class by way of being carefully steered in a marital way are Mr. George's three heroines, Clara, Grace and Mary; married to a baronet M. P., a rising barrister and a successful merchant, respectively * * "The were hard, strong stock, these three young women. Two hundred years of clean living, of such education as their country could give them, had blended with the influence of their times, of art, romance and poetry, to make them what they were; all their energies and desire, their hopes and their anticipations were confounded of the subtle effluvia of the raging life that was breathing into commerce, society, politics, and letters. They were the first product of the sedateness of the Nineteenth Century with the new and sudden spirit of inquiry which followed upon the disasters of the war. They were setting out, all of them, strong bodied, armed with puritanical rectitudes, with stereotyped and uncertain faiths, like caravels, laden with illusion, sailing towards a coast still below the horizon. * * Each of the sister becomes obsessed with the question: "What are women in the world for?" It is Mr. George's task to tell how these women answered the question, how their world answered it; how these caravels sailed; what winds impelled them; what port they reached. His accomplishment of the task is superb.

Quite in the manner of Stendhal's attention to detail, which he refines and sustains, as Bennett failed to do in "The Old Wives' Tale," quite in the pitiless Faubert "Bovary" manner; quite with the frankness of H. G. Wells, to whom his book is rather fulsomely dedicated; at times reminding of Thackeray * * "Sir Henry was the fourth baronet. The first had been created by the Regent, owing to Algernon Govan's anatomical merits. Sir Henry's ancestor happened to have feet exactly the same size as those of His Royal Highness and, for the sake of friendship, made a practice on Brighton Front of easing the Prince's new boots. So well did he perform this Samaritan service that the Regent made him a baronet. He did not live very long to enjoy his honors, for, a week later, he died, shot in a duel caused by the casual remark of a friend who asked him whether the new motto of the Gowans would be per pedes." * * Mr. George unfolds his story. He never hurries, never scamps. Once or twice he nods, as when he says that Grace read "Tono-Bungay" in a night, and once when he describes her as "pure in mind and driven by a coalition of obscure forces;" this, of a married woman, mother of two children, seeking her lover in his flat, will scarcely do. Another error is curious; an emotion is ascribed to Grace as having been experienced on a previous occasion; the emotion is very fervid and Mr. George puts it tensely—only it was Mary who experienced it, and not Grace. Possibly the fault of the proof-reader, this last.

The minor characters, especially that of Mrs. Westfield, mother of the three young matrons, are finely etched. The husbands, as in all novels of feminism, are minor. But here Mr. George departs from the rule. He makes these husbands indulgent to their wives and, with delicious irony, absolutely faithful to them. Clara and Grace, with plenty of money and no occupation, are pursued by the necessity of doing something, getting busy; Mary is pursued in different fashion: they are all up and doing, pressing forward to their second blooming. The husbands are blind in different degrees; the husband of Grace, stone-blind.

The story of Grace is the big story, those of Clara and Mary feeding it entirely adequately. The spirit of Grace is the spirit of bored discontent—feminists dub it divine. Everything for Grace must be at white-heat; cooling, it palls. She essays slum work, politics, dress, society, art—the description of London's artistic set is particularly diverting and down to the minute—and finally assures herself that what she wants is a man—not her tiresome, indulgent husband, father of her two children who have lost novelty * * * "Oh, mother, can't you understand that when one's got money, one's got to bring up one's children in a certain way? And that the nurse and the governess do it much better than you do? A mother who brought up her own children would make * * monsters of them. The boys would be prigs, and the girls wouldn't know anything. In our class a mother's only in the way."

The hour being ripe for Grace to embrace a career of freedom—feminist for prostitution—enter Enoch Fenor by way of accosting this huntress of new sensations on the street, an episode showing the delicate uses to which art can put vulgarity. Mr. George draws Grace a full-bosomed, auburn-haired woman—"Russet" with green eyes and freckles, where freckles can be most beautifying, on her creamy skin. He knows his business. And with Fenor he hews-strictly to the line of the feministic novelists. The creation—he is not a seducer (another would have answered Grace's purpose) though he uses all the arts and subterfuges of such, even to claiming Grace's pity for his loneliness—sounds quite seriously